This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): ~~In~~ A mandrel for use in an automatic packaging machine, ~~a~~ the mandrel comprising: a support plate having at least two pairs of elongated tracks, ~~said~~ the pairs of elongated tracks being oppositely disposed, ~~said~~ the elongated tracks of each pair being vertically aligned, a finger mounted to travel on each of ~~said~~ the elongated tracks of ~~said~~ the support plate, a cam follower ~~means~~ for traveling in a cam track extending along a conveyor in ~~said~~ the automatic packaging ~~means~~ machine, ~~said~~ the cam track having contours which guide and direct ~~said~~ the cam follower as a function of an instantaneous position of ~~said~~ the mandrel as it travels along ~~said~~ the conveyor, rotary means responsive to ~~said~~ the cam follower for moving ~~said~~ at least two pairs of oppositely disposed fingers away from each other on ~~said~~ the tracks, and ~~spring~~ resilient biasing means for pulling ~~said~~ at least two pairs of oppositely disposed fingers closer to each other on the tracks to grip an object between ~~said~~ the fingers, whereby the resilient biasing means tightens the grip, and movement of ~~said~~ the cam follower ~~means~~ along ~~said~~ the contours ~~opening said~~ overcomes the resilient biasing means and loosens the grip ~~and said spring means closing said grip~~.

Claim 2 (currently amended): The mandrel of claim 1, wherein ~~said~~ the fingers are operable to grip ~~said~~ the object at any position along the length of ~~said~~ the elongated tracks responsive to the ~~spring~~ resilient biasing means being enabled by ~~said~~ the cam follower traveling in ~~said~~ the cam track.

Claims 3-5 (Cancelled)

Claim 6 (currently amended): An automatic packaging machine comprising a conveyor for moving a plurality of object carrying mandrels around a closed path, a cam track accompanying ~~said~~ the path, ~~said~~ the cam track having contours which define functional locations along ~~said~~ the path, each of ~~said~~ the mandrels having a plurality of fingers which move

variable distances together or apart in order to grip or release one of a plurality of objects having different widths, means responsive to ~~said~~ the contours of ~~said~~ the cam track for causing ~~said~~ the fingers to release ~~said~~ the object, and ~~spring~~ resilient biasing means for causing ~~said~~ the fingers to grip ~~said~~ the object, whereby objects of different widths are selectively carried by ~~said~~ the mandrels without requiring a readjustment of ~~said~~ the machine.

Claims 7 and 8 (Cancelled).

Claim 9. The automatic machine of claim 6, wherein ~~said~~ the object is a box, and ~~said~~ the machine further comprising means for causing ~~said~~ the fingers to open and form a box having a shape other than a parallelepiped.

Claim 10 (Cancelled).

Claim 11 (currently amended): An automatic packaging machine comprising a pair of conveyor chains forming a closed path through ~~said~~ the machine, a cam track extending between ~~said~~ the conveyor chains and along ~~said~~ the closed path, ~~said~~ the cam track having contours which define work station locations on ~~said~~ the path through ~~said~~ the machine, a cam follower for following ~~said~~ the cam track, a plurality of mandrels carried by ~~said~~ the pair of conveyor chains and controlled by ~~said~~ the cam follower, each of ~~said~~ the mandrels having a plurality of replaceable fingers for gripping and releasing an object, means including a spring for pulling ~~said~~ the fingers to grip ~~said~~ the object, and means responsive to ~~said~~ the cam follower and ~~said~~ the contours of ~~said~~ the cam track for enabling ~~said spring~~ the resilient biasing means to apply ~~said~~ the grip and for overcoming ~~said spring~~ the resilient biasing means for opening ~~said~~ the fingers and releasing ~~said~~ the grip on ~~said~~ the object.

Claim 12 (Cancelled)

Claim 13 (currently amended): The machine of claim 11 further comprising a support having a plurality of threaded holes defining the locations of ~~said~~ the fingers, ~~said~~ the fingers being replaced by unscrewing one set of fingers and screwing in another set of fingers.

Claim 14 (currently amended): An automatic package machine comprising a plurality of mandrels, each of ~~said~~ the mandrels including at least four fingers which move together and apart within a range to grip and release objects having respective varied widths, at least one conveyor means having a plurality of support platforms attached thereto at periodic locations along the length thereof, means associated with ~~said~~ the support platforms for moving ~~said~~ the mandrels between a position in which ~~said~~ the grip is applied and a position in which ~~said~~ the release is applied as ~~said~~ the conveyor moves ~~said~~ the support platforms along a predetermined path, finger width control means including a cam slot extending along said predetermined path, the cam slot having contours providing ~~said~~ the control, ~~said~~ the contours enabling a change in width of a spacing between ~~said~~ the fingers as ~~said~~ the conveyor moves along ~~said~~ the predetermined path, a cam follower mounted on ~~said~~ the mandrel to follow ~~said~~ the cam slot, ~~spring~~ resilient biasing means for controlling the position of ~~said~~ the fingers to apply ~~said~~ the grip when enabled by the contours in which the associated cam follower moves, ~~said spring~~ the resilient biasing means causing ~~said~~ the fingers to apply a grip to ~~said~~ the object, means responsive to a movement of ~~said~~ the cam follower in ~~said~~ the contours for moving ~~said~~ the fingers apart to increase the width between ~~said~~ the fingers in order to release ~~said~~ the object or to enable ~~said spring~~ the resilient biasing means for moving ~~said~~ the fingers together to grip ~~said~~ the object, ~~said~~ the cam follower being mounted on an individually associated rotary shaft, a pair of lever arms coupled to ~~said~~ the rotary shaft and extending from ~~said~~ the rotary shaft to an associated pair of ~~said~~ the fingers, means responsive to a movement of ~~said~~ the cam follower and to a resulting rotation of ~~said~~ the shaft for pulling or pushing ~~said~~ the lever arms and moving ~~said~~ the fingers together or apart.

Claims 15-22 (cancelled).